



**T**he City of Hampton's premiere park is a 456 acre environmental education and wildlife management facility. Born from borrow pits and garbage dumps, the park is truly a success story of reclamation of our natural resources. From the 10,000 square foot nature center overlooking Sandy Bottom Lake to the elusive creatures that inhabit the wetland marshes, there is something for everyone at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. We invite you to explore nature the way it was meant to be.

Sandy Bottom Nature Park has been recognized by numerous agencies and federations for its cleanliness, outstanding improvements to the community, environmental education, and wildlife conservation efforts.



**Contact us today!**

**Sandy Bottom Nature Park**

1255 Big Bethel Rd., Hampton VA 23666

(757) 825-4657 • Fax: (757) 825-4658

[www.hampton.gov/sandybottom](http://www.hampton.gov/sandybottom)



**City of Hampton Parks and Recreation**

[www.hampton.gov/parks](http://www.hampton.gov/parks)

The Hampton Parks and Recreation Department does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, religion, sex, or disability. If you are disabled and have need for a special accommodation in order to participate, please contact 825-4657.



**Sandy Bottom Nature Park**



# Sandy Bottom Nature Park



## Park Amenities

### Fishing

Sandy Bottom Lake is home to a variety of game fish species: Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Crappie and Catfish are just a few. Visitors may fish from the pier, located near the nature center, or they may rent a boat. Either way, those who love to fish will not be disappointed with the action.

### Hiking and Biking Trails

There are 12 miles of nature trails throughout the park. All trails, with the exception of Osprey Point and Wood Duck are bicycle accessible. Whether wishing to discover wetland marshes, wildflowers, hardwood forest or lake edge trails, Sandy Bottom Nature Park's extensive trail system has much to offer to the nature enthusiast. You never know what creatures you may see along the way.



### Camping

The peaceful and quite atmosphere of the park makes every visit tranquil and relaxing. Eleven primitive campsites, two of which are group sites, are nestled in the shady, wooded forest. There are also four tent cabins that are situated on the lake's edge giving you a spectacular view of Crystal Lake. Tent cabins and group sites may be reserved in advance. Individual primitive camping sites are on a first come first serve basis.

### Picnic Shelters

The park offers five different picnic shelters throughout the park for your picnic needs. These may be reserved in advance. There are also numerous picnic tables throughout the park that are open on a first come first serve basis.



### Boat Rentals

Sandy Bottom Nature Park offers canoe, paddle and jon boats for rent at the nature center. Canoe in narrow channels or paddle your way around Crystal Lake in one of our paddle boats. The views are breathtaking. Special guided canoe trips, led by park personnel, are occasionally offered throughout the year. Inquire inside the nature center or ask one of the Park Rangers.

Whether fishing for the big one or just enjoying a relaxing day on the lake, jon boats are available for rental at the nature center.

### Nature Center

The 10,000 square foot nature center that overlooks Sandy Bottom Lake houses environmental & animal exhibits along with a conference room and classroom that may be rented out for functions.

### Flora & Fauna

Sandy Bottom Nature Park has a diverse flora and fauna within the 456 acres. Flora includes forested, wetlands, shrub-scrub wetlands, forested wetlands, and open area species. This ranges from white oak to trillium to cattails. Fauna in the park holds a wide range of species from the common white-tail deer to the rarely seen threatened Mabee's Salamander and endangered canebrake rattlesnake which are both protected by the state. With the completion of the wetland mitigation project, the park's stop over for birds during migration has increased. Both the flora and fauna are important parts of the parks ecosystem as they interact to form a more stable environment as a whole.



## History Timeline

### 1952

The mining of sand began, creating borrow pits which later became lakes.

### 1978

The land was purchased by VA Department of Transportation (VDOT).

### 1978-1990

The land sat vacant as a haven for illegal dumping, homeless camps, illegal hunting & partying.

### 1990

The land was given to the City of Hampton by VDOT, with an understanding that part of the land would be converted back to a wetlands area.

### 1992

The City of Hampton unveiled plans to turn the land into a nature based park.

### 1994

The City of Hampton began hiring staff to design and develop what would become Sandy Bottom Nature Park.

### 1996

Park officially opened to the public.

### 1995

The City of Hampton hired its first sworn Law Enforcement Park Rangers. These Rangers were tasked with cleaning up the illegal activity and securing the land for construction and the clean up process began.

### 1999

Construction began on the 52-acre wetland VDOT project of converting an old borrow pit/lake back into a wetlands area.

### 2003

Hurricane *Isabel* devastated the park causing 2 years of clean-up.

### 2006

Sandy Bottom Nature Park 10 year anniversary as a city park. Construction of the VDOT wetlands mitigation site was completed with years of monitoring to follow.